

NEWS RELEASE  
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## **ISTOOK VOTES FOR CUTS IN CONGRESS' BUDGET**

*Washington, D.C.* - The U.S. House of Representatives is tightening its own belt for a change, according to Oklahoma Congressman Ernest Istook, (R-5th District). Istook voted to pass the Conference Committee report for the Legislative Branch Appropriation, approved by the House on a vote of 305-to-101. This year's spending bill to operate the legislative branch cuts more than \$207 million from last year's levels, a 9 percent cut.

**"This is a far cry from last year, when the old Congress boosted spending on itself by \$101.6 million,"** Istook said.

The bill:

- \* eliminates 2,350 full-time positions in Congress, equal to 8.6 percent of the total staff. This includes the effort begun in January to reduce committee staff by one-third;

- \* cuts the budget specifically for congressional staff and expenses by more than \$57 million;

- \* requires the House to phase out piles of archaic paperwork, and computerize records. This means more work done for less money;
- \* ends subsidies to the House beauty salon and barber shop (to be privatized and must support themselves), and ends free luxury-bound editions of the United States Code to congressmen;
- \* ends the government-subsidy to the flag office, which flies flags over the Capitol, assembly-line style, then distributes them to congressional offices for giving away. An historical society may continue this service at no cost to the taxpayer.

In addition, the bill requires annual reports on how much each member spends and saves from his or her office accounts.

**"Congress could certainly stand to make many more reforms,"** Istook said. **"But when it comes to cutting bloated bureaucracy, the House is finally practicing what it preaches."**

